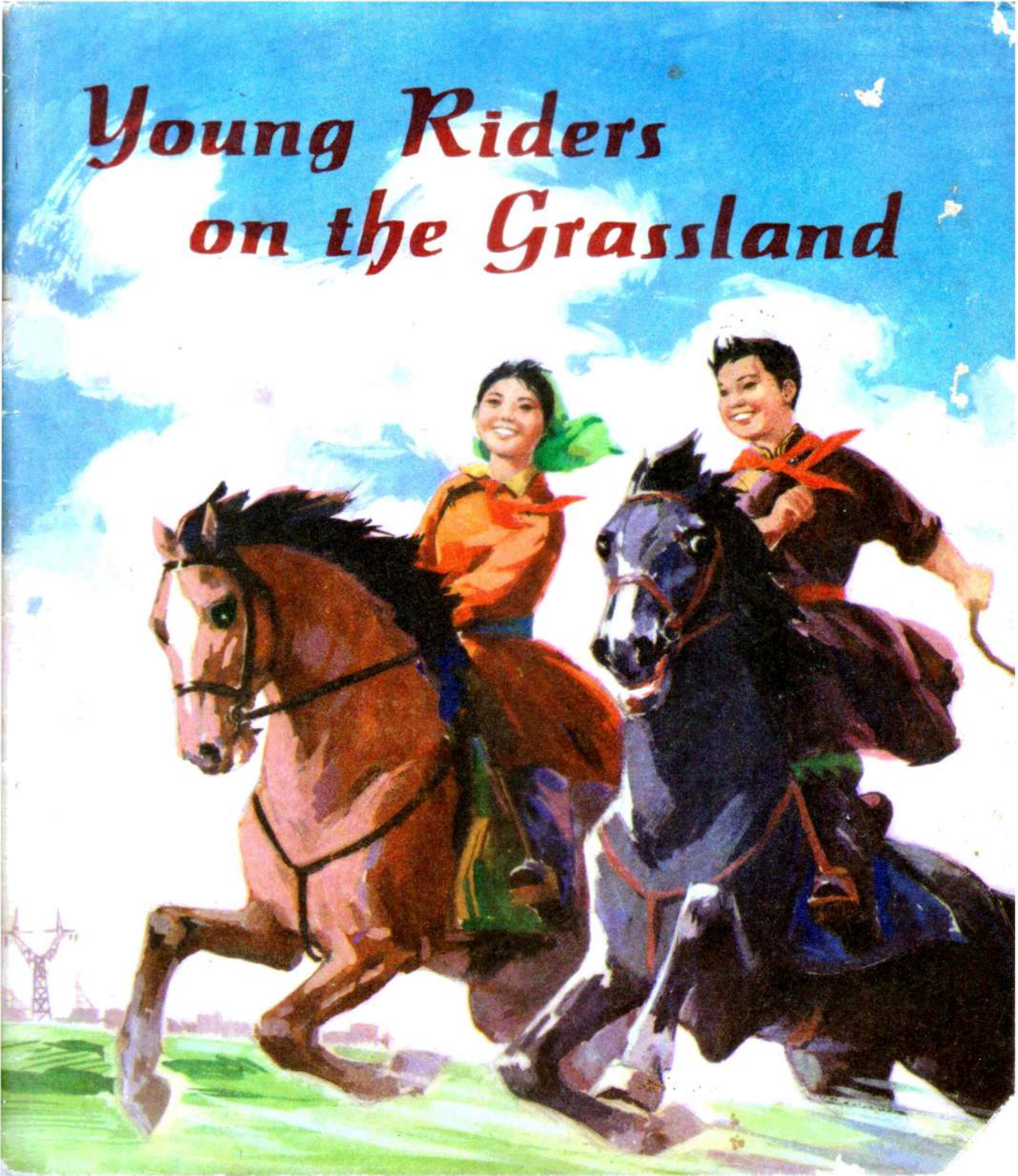
Young Riders on the Grassland



YOUNG RIDERS on the Grassland

Text by
HUA KUO-CHANG

Illustrations by
LIU TA-WEI

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS
PEKING

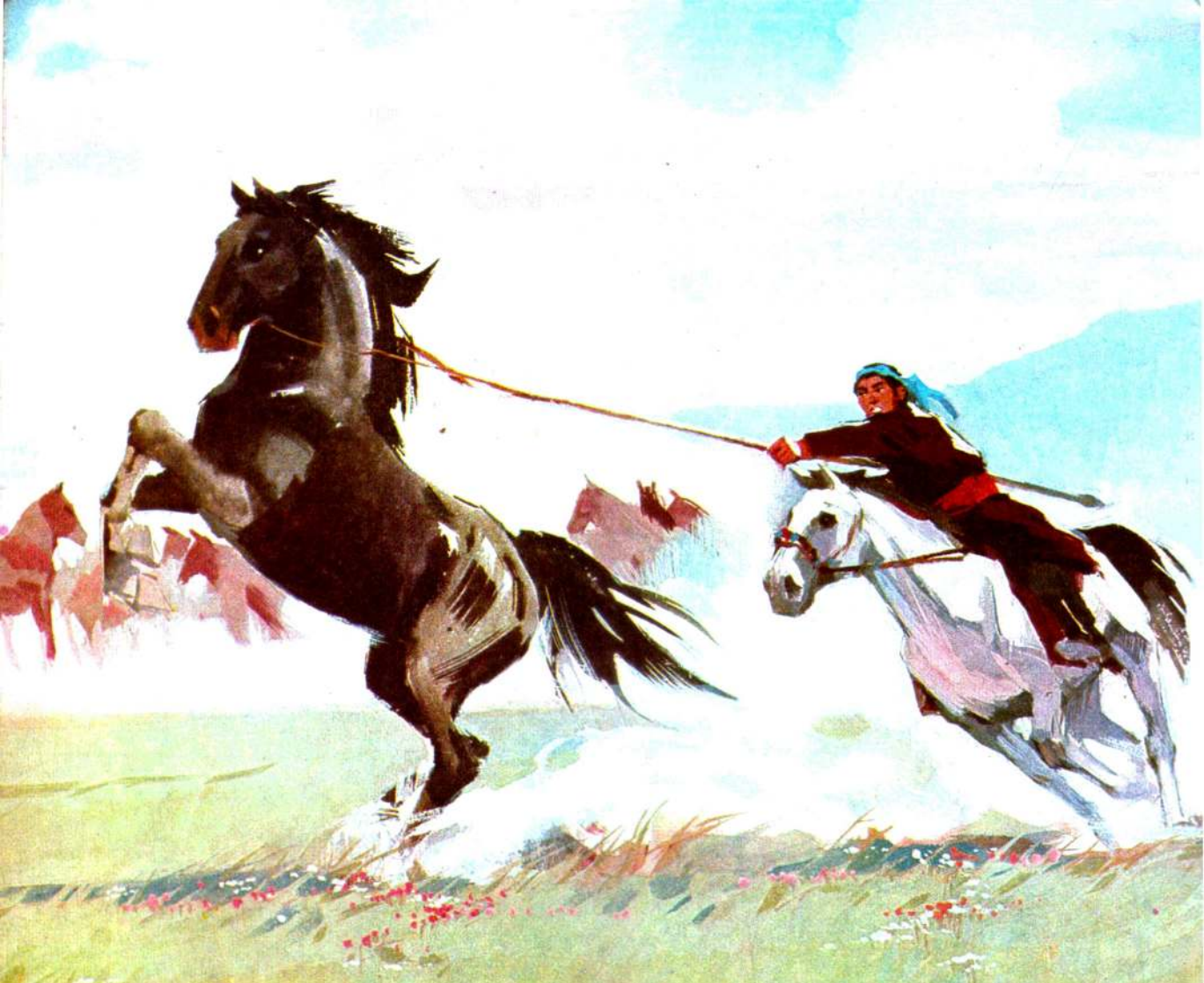
First Edition 1977

Printed in the People's Republic of China

The Story

Young Riders on the Grassland tells about Patu and Szuchin, two Little Red Guards of China's Inner Mongolia grassland. They take as model Comrade Lei Feng, a good PLA fighter cited by Chairman Mao, and act in the revolutionary spirit of class love and of helping others. With Mao Tsetung Thought providing their ideals, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution their tempering, the children grow up wholesome and strong.

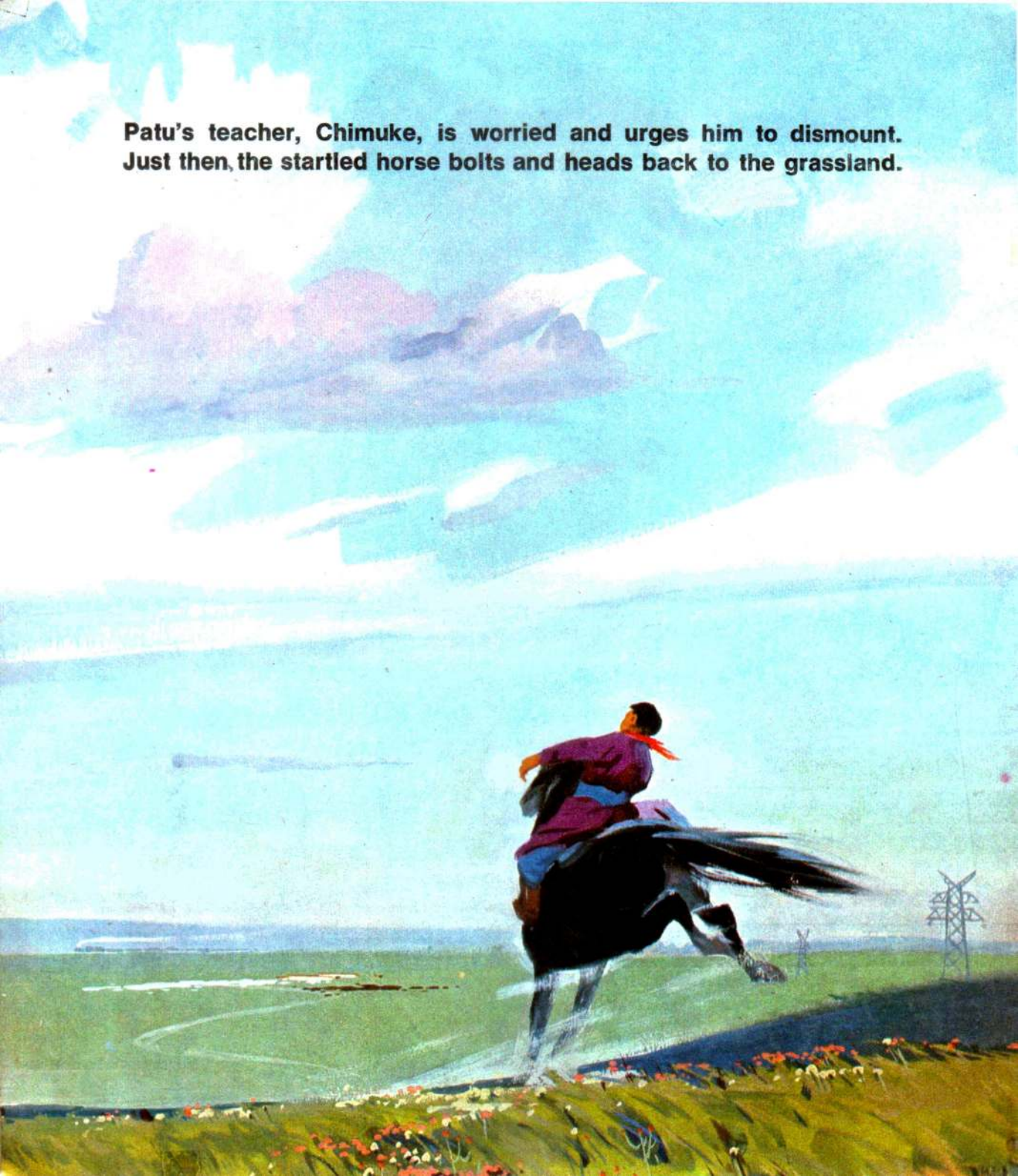
Patu and Szuchin are both excellent riders of a primary school on China's Inner Mongolia grassland. Patu has learned a little about handling horses and considers himself the better rider, though others think Szuchin rides better.



This summer the brigade allocated a horse to the school. The youngsters already have their eyes on a black one, and a herder lassoes it at once.

The herder brings the horse to the school and Patu takes a running leap onto its back without even waiting for it to be bridled.

Patu's teacher, Chimuke, is worried and urges him to dismount. Just then, the startled horse bolts and heads back to the grassland.



The black horse bucks and rears and dumps Patu on the ground.

Patu's leg is hurt, and Szuchin helps him with the lessons he misses. Today she brings him herb medicine and tells him they're to have a horse race.

The very mention of horse racing excites Patu. He says, "Great! There's always a youth event. I must enter it . . . . Hey, where did you get the medicine?"

"We got it while we were working," replies Szuchin. "It's really effective. Drink it and you'll soon be better."

She continues: "But don't always think of ways to grab the limelight. You should think of the revolution and win honour for the collective."

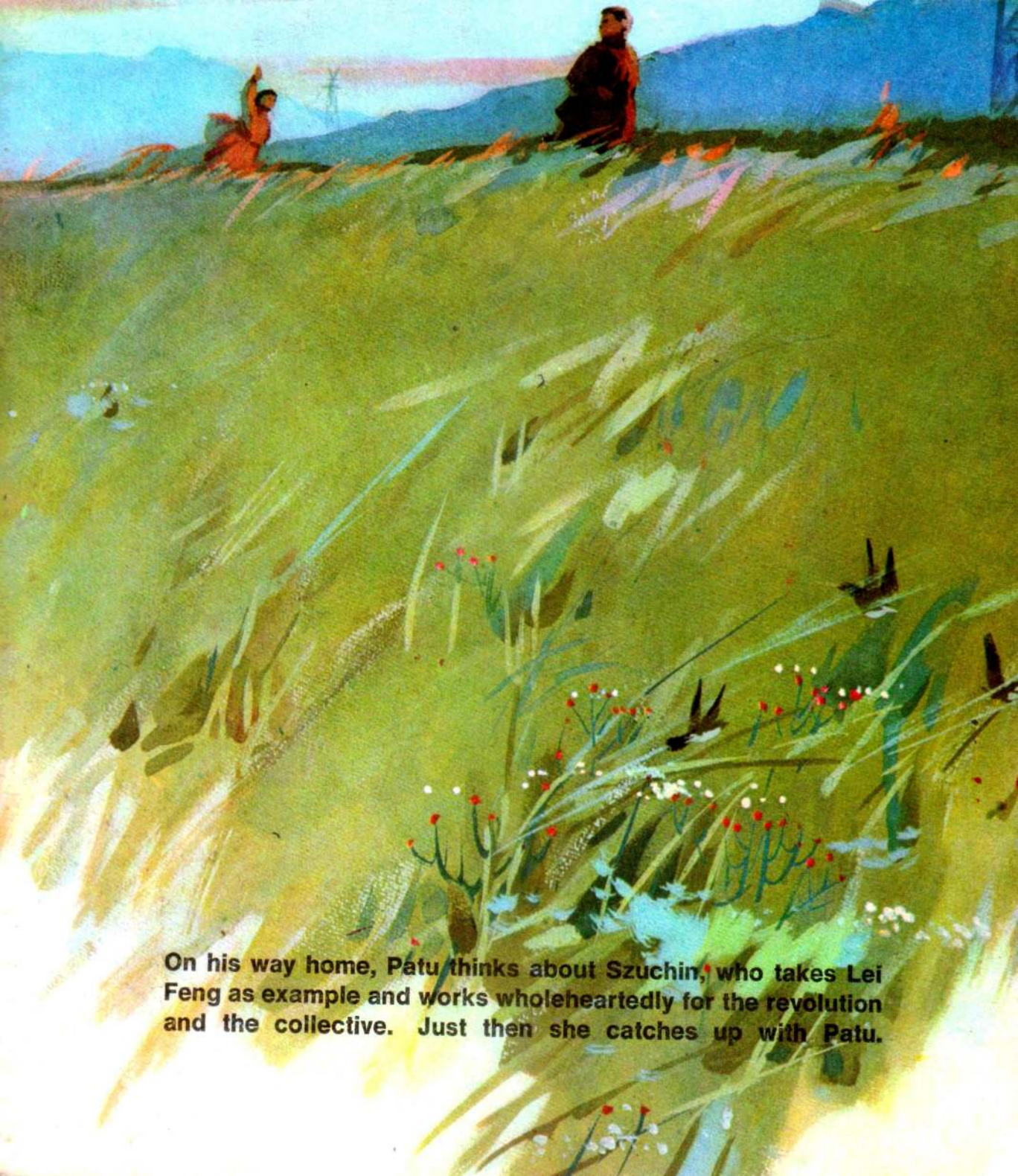
Szuchin's medicine works fine, and in no time Patu is up and around. One day he leads the horse over and mounts it. Strange! It gallops a perfect circle and seems well-trained.

Patu gleefully bounces down and yells: "Look, Szuchin, how well I've trained this horse." She laughs and starts to say something, but stops short.

Teacher Chimuke walks over and asks: "Is it so easy to train a horse, Patu? After your accident, Szuchin had a hard time with this black. She was thrown off many times." Patu understands in a flash and is embarrassed.

Time for classes. The teacher reads the text: "Once Lei Feng bought a train ticket for a worried woman who had lost hers. She was very grateful and asked: 'What is your name, comrade? Where do you work?' " Then the teacher asks Patu to read on.

He stands up and reads loudly: ". . . Lei Feng smiled. Did the woman plan to pay him back? 'It doesn't matter,' he replied. 'I'm a People's Liberation Armyman, and I work in China.' ".



On his way home, Patu thinks about Szuchin, who takes Lei Feng as example and works wholeheartedly for the revolution and the collective. Just then she catches up with Patu.

When she asks if he understood the lesson, Patu says, "Yes. Lei Feng had a clear-cut class stand and the revolutionary spirit of helping other comrades. I must learn from him."

Patu says he will learn from Szuchi. But she adds: "I do
do nearly enough. We must both learn from Uncle Lei Feng."

The grassland has taken on a new look since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The horse race this year is especially grand. Patu has led out the black horse, Szu-chin a chestnut. They stand proudly on the starting line.

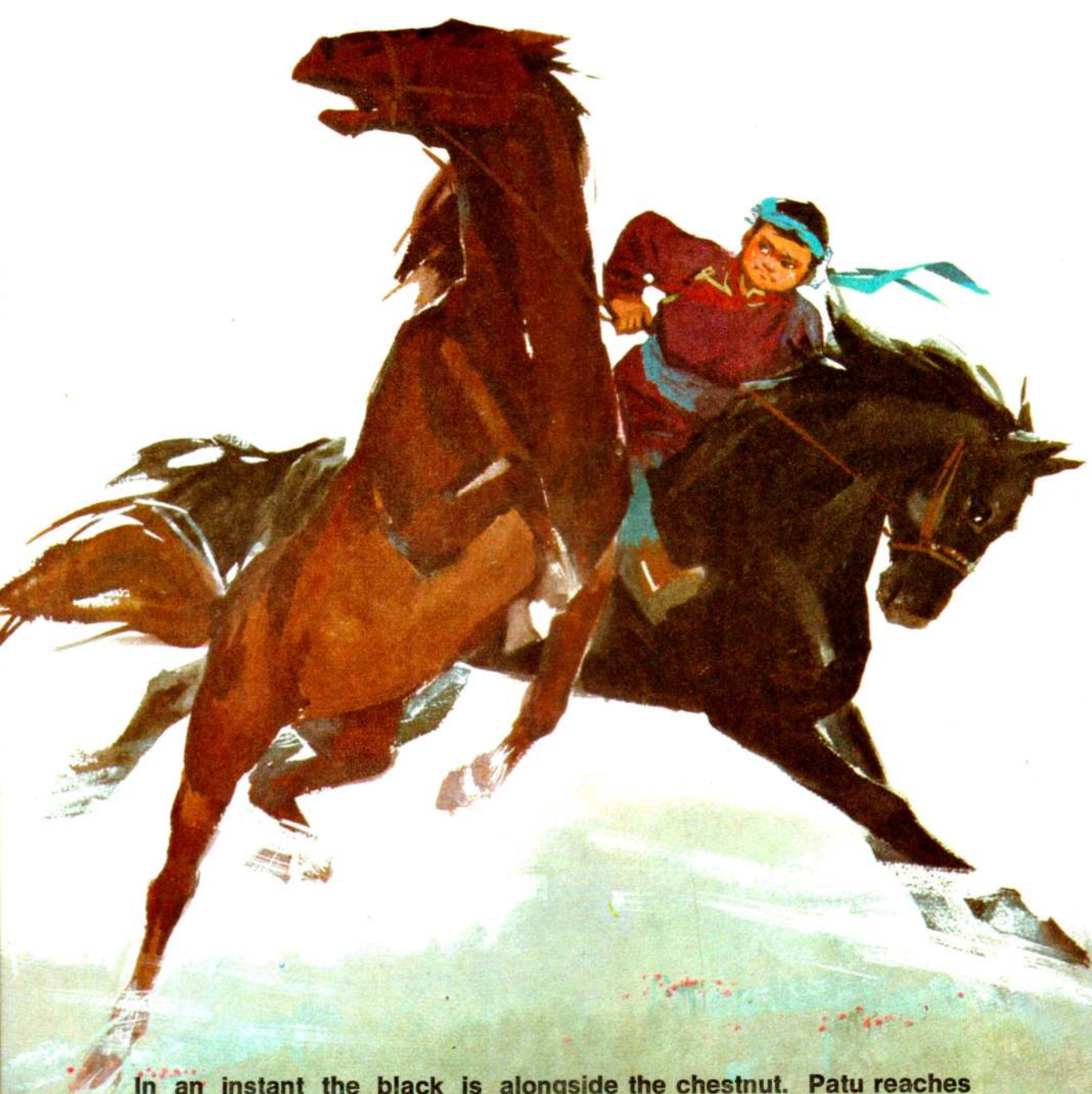
"You ride the black," offers Patu. "It's faster." "Don't be like that," replies Szuchin. "You're more used to it."

The race is about to begin. The teacher reminds Patu and Szuchin: "Don't forget Uncle Lei Feng's revolutionary spirit. Friendship comes first, competition second."
"Don't worry, teacher," Patu assures her.

Bang! All those in the race are off like arrows at the sound of the starting gun. The young riders' spirits are high as they flash by. Patu riding the black is out front.

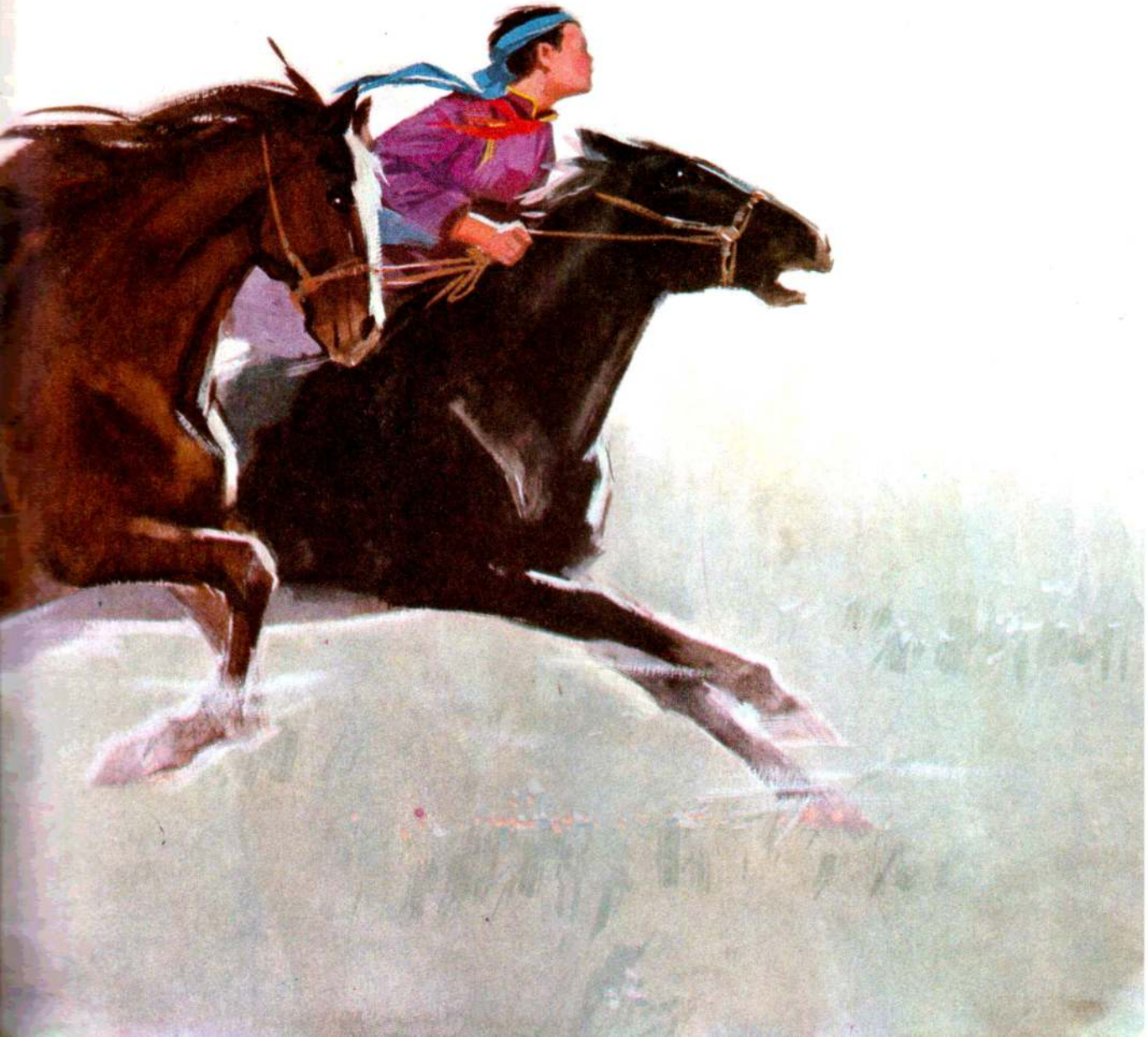
The hooves of the horses thunder across the grassland.
Suddenly Patu hears a frightened neigh from behind.
The chestnut is rearing and throwing Szuchin off.

He must bring it under control without delay! Patu reins in his mount and turns around in pursuit of the chestnut.



In an instant the black is alongside the chestnut. Patu reaches over and with a practised hand gathers up the reins of the runaway.

Pulling the reins over the horse's head,
he races back with it to Szuchin.



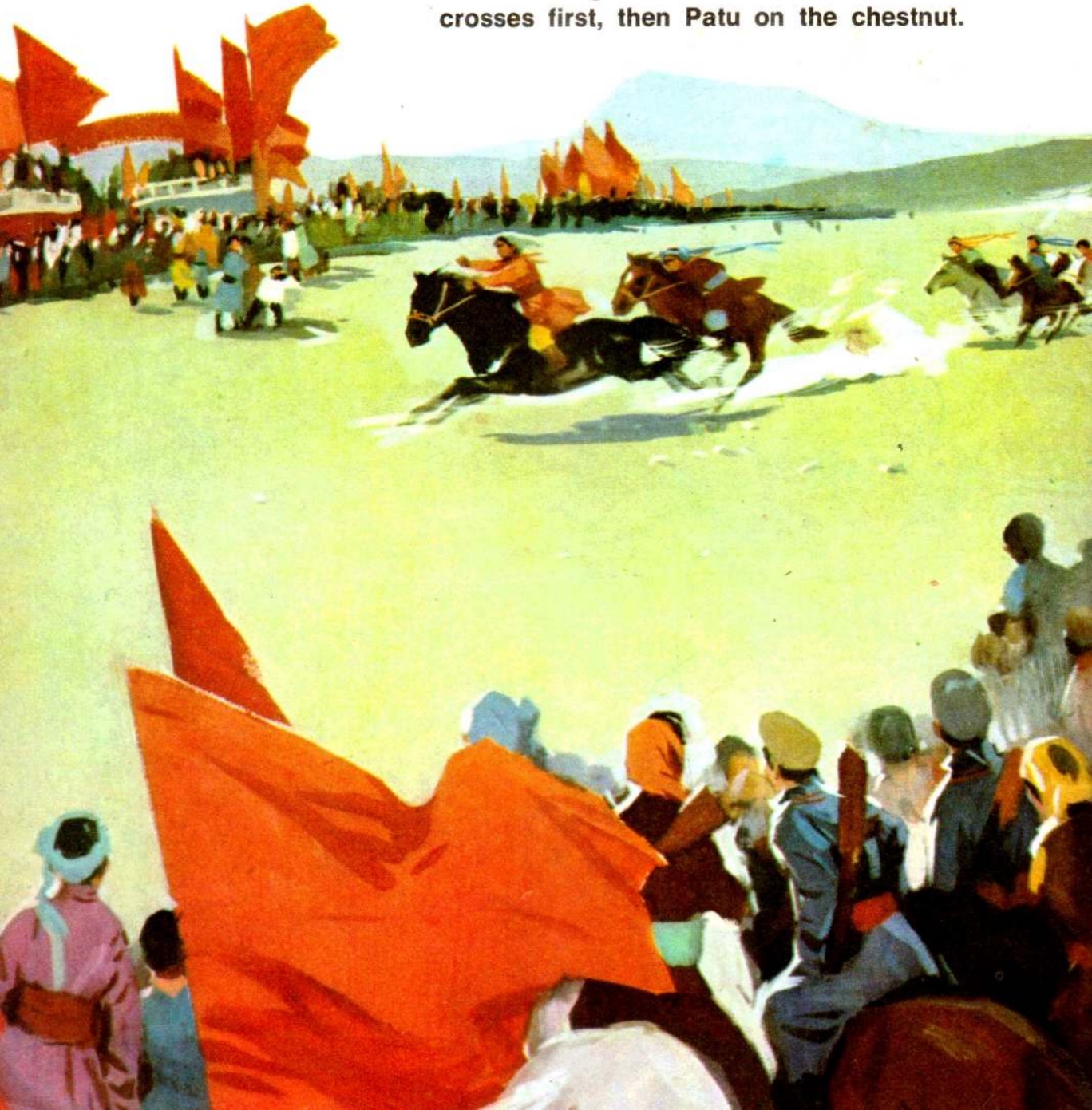
He dismounts and asks Szuchin if she is hurt. When she says "No," Patu pushes her up onto the black, explaining, "Hurry! Trade horses. I'll handle the chestnut."

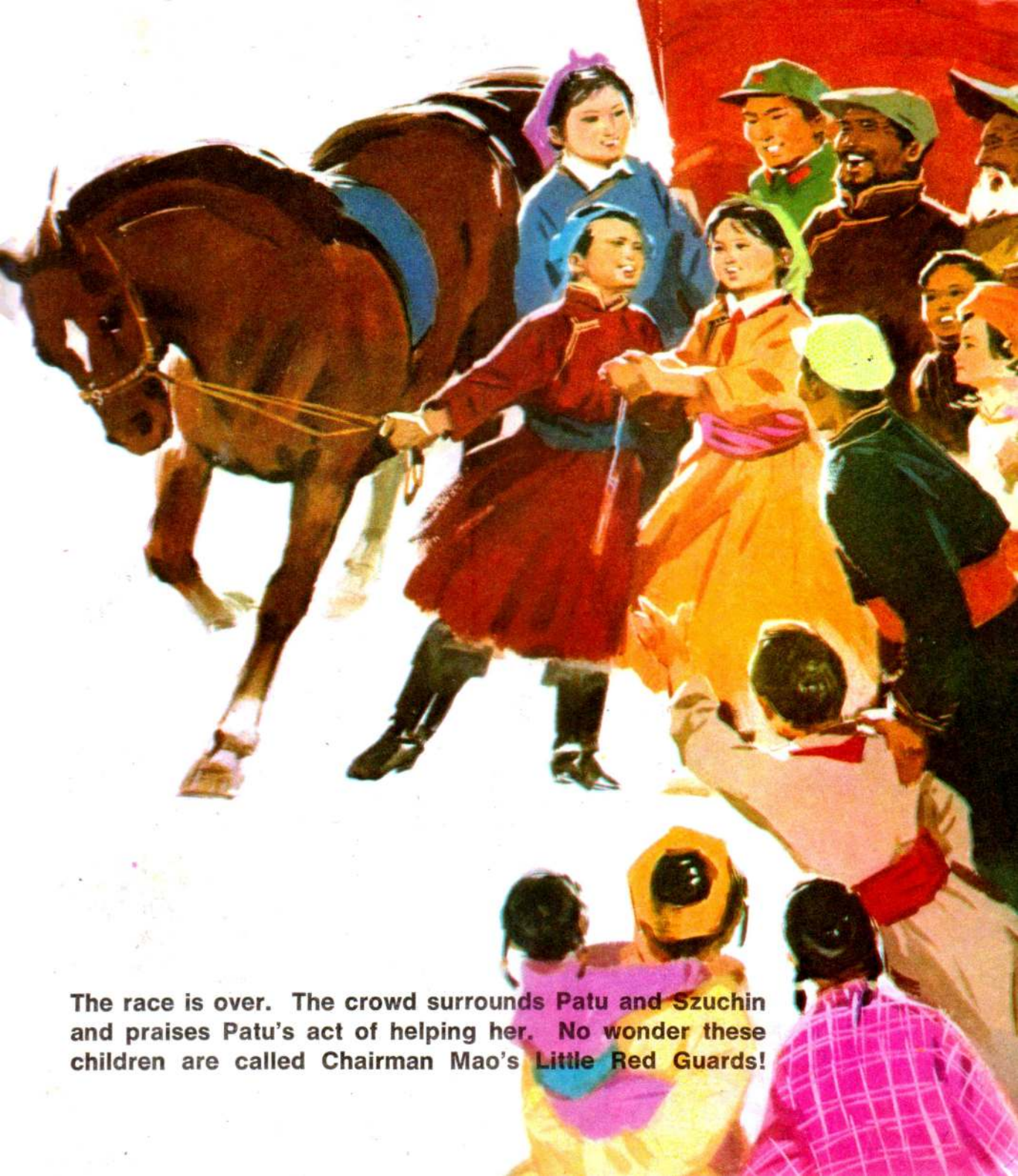
The other riders flash past, their riding crops held high. Szuchin soon catches up with the rest.

Patu on the chestnut
races to catch up,
his eyes straight ahead,
like a brave cavalryman.

The finishing line of
the 20-kilometre race
is in sight.
Szuchin passes one horse
after another and takes
the lead on the black.
Patu urges the chestnut on
and is about to overtake her.

The finishing line! Szuchin on the black crosses first, then Patu on the chestnut.





The race is over. The crowd surrounds Patu and Szuchin and praises Patu's act of helping her. No wonder these children are called Chairman Mao's Little Red Guards!

But the praise embarrasses Patu, who says blushing: "It's only what we Little Red Guards ought to do — learn from Comrade Lei Feng and be good successors to the communist cause."

小 骑 手

滑国瑾 编
刘大为 绘

外文出版社出版（北京）
1977年（20开）第一版
编号：（英）8050—1679
00345
88—E—140P